

# CHAIRSHOTS

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# SHOOTKICK

by Jeff Bowdren

Okay, let's discuss this whole "Mummy" thing in Smokey Mountain. This whole angle begs the question, "Who's been providing hallucinogens for Jim Cornette?" Seriously, this was a baaaaaaddddd looking angle. Besides being totally ludicrous, it just didn't seem to fit with the direction Jimmy wants to take the company in. It was almost as if Vince had called him up and said, "Look Jimmy, I've got this idea and it could bomb bigtime, so I want to test it out on you guys". Can anyone else offer an explanation for that ridiculous looking thing. Consequently, Jimmy & the Mummy get the big, if somewhat belated, boot to the side of the head. However, allow me to also state that this Shootkick is in no way a reflection on Grand Wizard/Abdullah Farouk wannabe Darryl Van Horn, who seems to have great potential. My only problem with him is that some of his stuff is so inside I wonder if it flies right over the head of his audience.

Now, let me finish last month's abbreviated column on the Tumble, er Rumble. I figured I went into enough detail on the whole Hart Bros mess, but what about the rest of the card. How about this whole Undertaker as Jesus Christ business? I'm wondering how that played in Peoria. Ah, if only my old wayward buddy Brother Jeff Steele were still writing for the sheets. Speaking of that weasel, hey J.D. McKay! If you got a current address on Bro. Jeff, send it to me care of Barry. And how about that thrilling Battle Royal, huh? The only time any of us watching it had any fun at all was when Diesel was wading thru the crew of washed up babyfaces. Weren't you wishing that they would have had Sean Michaels come out for the inevitable confrontation. Hey guys, throw us a bone! And didn't the arena crowd seem to love Lex Luger? Yeah right. All that money you put into getting this guy over as a baby and he is still not over! The people can tell when someone is faking it, and it seems painfully obvious that Lex is forcing his love of the fans. To borrow a quote from our friends on the Ron & Ron show, "You can dress a pig in sequins, but it's still a pig". Which brings me to Missy Hyatt. (Now that was a segue!) Sources here at Shootkick tell us that our good friend Ms. Hyatt is no longer employed with WCW-excuse me while I fake a tear. Faking is something that Missy is supposedly very good at. I mean, look how long she's been able to fake being a wrestling performer! That of course was what I meant when I talked about her faking it. (Hey stupid draw your own joke into that) Now our good friends over at the Torch have gone public with their adoration/drooling/ogling/lusting/side-by-side hard on's for Missy. I'm of course speaking of Mark "Not worthy of mention in this column but what the hell" Madden and Bruce "Oh shit, Bowdren mentioned my name again" Mitchell, who reportedly had their tongues at full extension at Starrcade in an attempt to swap spit with Missy. I just wanted to make it clear that Wade Keller would never be caught slapping the salami at Missy Hyatt, because by God!, he's a journalist! Anyway, my question to Mark and Bruce, most respectfully of course, and understanding that men, being the total horndogs that we all know we are, have a right to get a woody over whoever the hell we want, is this. Just what the fuck do you see in that..... let me say what everyone else has been thinking....SKANK! I mean, you talk about your washed up/used up/fucked up/dried up/passed around/nothing happening pieces of trash! I see a career in porno films right around the corner for the old girl. It's a shame when I remember back to how great I thought she was during the Missy/John Tatum/Eddie Gilbert triangle feud. I guess in hindsight leaving John Tatum was the best thing (as far as entertaining t.v. goes) and the worst thing (her career has been careening downhill faster than Tommy Moe in Olympic downhill) at the same time. However, let me point out that on her best day as the rich society bitch in Dallas or with the UWF, she still wasn't as good as Tammy Fytch is today.

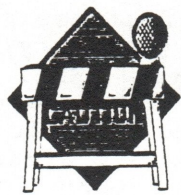
NOTES: So I see where the Fat Man is finally out as the pencil in WCW. Be honest. Do you really think that the dynamic booking office of Eric Bischoff, Mike Graham & Greg Gagne is going to turn the company around? And did you get a load of those comments by 2 Cold Scorpio, where in he mentioned how much he respected Gagne-since he knew about fliers?? I can see that Scorpio has certainly learned the art of working people....I don't mean to make this a totally anti-Torch column, but did we really need



a 12-part interview with Tod Gordon? At least, that's how many issues it seemed had some thoughts from Tod on biz...So does Dusty being canned as booker mean we'll never get to see a conclusion to the Dusty/Assassin feud that kept everyone on the edge of their seats during '93?.... So I guess I'm also sort of wondering whether I'm the only one who's noticed that the one guy in Smokey Mountain who really seems to be over with the fans as a baby is Tony Anthony? I mean, hey, Tracey Smothers is a nice guy, he's paid his dues and all that, but that smile of his seems soooooo....fake. He just looks like a guy who hates being a baby. Tony seems to relish his role as the butt-kicking baby who won't take shit from anyone. However, the Dirty White Girl was good for a gimmick series, but a babyface valet or manager will never work. If it comes down to DWG or Tammy Fytch, I gotta dump DWG. And please Jimmy, what ever you do, please don't turn Brian Lee and ruin what's become a great act. He's hilarious as a heel and totally worthless in the other role....Which brings me to this issue's Pete Lederberg Analogy. This issue's analogy is basketball. Some of you may have watched ESPN2 and one of its commentators, a fat slob named Hank Goldberg. He also hosts a local sports call-in show here in South Florida. He came up with an interesting comment the other night that can be shown as a parallel to wrestling. He was talking about the way that certain NBA players have been marketed. He talked about the way that Shaquille O'Neal has been virtually forced down our throat since his rookie year. The shoes, the Pepsi commercials, the rap music, etc. Goldberg stated that he felt that eventually that Shaq's teammate Anfranee Hardaway would turn out to be the guy that all the advertisers looked too as their representative. His thinking was that Hardaway was a more multi-dimensional player than O'Neal, who if you watched the All-Star game seems more and more to be exposed as a guy who can dunk & block shots and that's about it. Hardaway, Goldberg speculated, is a guy who has a more well rounded game, which in turn will make him more of a valuable player/visible player/marketable commodity. So now your asking yourself just what the hell this has to do with wrestling? Let's take a look at the upcoming Wrestlemania. Using the analogy I just looked at, Lex Luger would be Shaquille O'Neal, the rather one dimensional guy who's been forced down our throat. Bret Hart would be Anfranee Hardaway, the guy who more well rounded and skilled at many different phases of his profession. Goldberg's final conclusion was that the public will never fully embrace someone who is being forced upon them. In basketball terms, guys like Larry Bird, Magic Johnson & Michael Jordan have earned their position of public acceptance while at the same time maintaining their level of excellence. Goldberg noted that even someone with the skill of a Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was never fully embraced by the public. In wrestling terms, a guy like Bret Hart or a Ric Flair has worked hard to maintain their professional standards of work and have been embraced by the public on the public's own terms. Lex Luger is Kareem in this scenario. If Vince McMahon decides to force Luger upon us as world champion, I truly believe that he'll find an audience that will be unwilling to accept him as world champion. The embrace of a performer is something that must be earned. Watching the Royal Rumble and the fans to Hart and Luger at the end, its easy to see that the public has embraced Bret Hart in this scenario, and is poised to reject Lex Luger.....

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# THE RAZOR'S EDGE



By Jimmy Berkley

"Do you write for one of those wrestling dirt sheets?" asked the WCW person who books me. That was the last question I ever expected to be asked in the dressing room but thankfully it was just he and I standing there. I could sense the answer was strictly a formality and if I lied in response, I would only look foolish. I firmly but quietly replied "Yes sir, I do." The eye contact made at that point told me I was okay but he was sort of the messenger of what came next. "Well he said someone said you did and he doesn't think it's a good idea since you're working with us every now and then." I clearly knew who "He" was and I knew I instantly earned his respect by not denying it, lying or whatever. "We plan on using you when we tape TV down here and for a house show occasionally, so you know do whatever you gotta do but don't put any heat on yourself with the sheet stuff, you know what I mean?" Unfortunately I did know what he meant and as I sat between Maxx Payne and Missy Hyatt while they verbally bashed each other on the bus back to the hotel, I knew I had to make a call to Hallandale that night.

"I gotta quit CHAIRSHOTS" I said cautiously to Barry over the phone. "Why, what's the matter?" he replied. I recited the above conversation back to him and although I sensed Barry was somewhat pissed which in a later conversation I found out wasn't even true, I was comforted by his basic response of "Ya gotta do what you think is right, brother." We discussed the certainty of these "future" bookings and what if they fucked me come the next set of tapings, etc. I had already considered the possibilities of a "no call" to be back and do the next tapings but I made my choice. It did indeed bother me for two reasons, one being that I was the first person who helped Barry into doing CHAIRSHOTS. We had collaborated on some satire while I had been staying over down there before and we seemed to have a similar flair for making fun of even the most serious issues. I guess since I was there from the embryo of CHAIRSHOTS and went around to the printers to test some graphics with him for the first issue, I felt like a heel turning my back on the sheet. Secondly, I was enjoying seeing the responses to my material and reading the letters and hearing the comments readers made to Barry which he passed on to me during conversation. I guess you could call it ego since I do have one, inflated at times, but I don't consider it a problem since I admit it. It's the people who say they don't but do who have a problem. After getting the sheets since the mid 70's and never being an actual participant, I was enjoying myself doing the column. I never wanted to be like a clone of others so I knew if I ever did a column, it would be unique since I had exposure to the inner workings of the wrestling biz and often would bitch and moan to Barry when I would read someone's view or opinion in the Meltzer or Keller sheets and I knew how far off target they really were. Now, I don't exude confidence but I do know I have enlightened some people to understand certain things about wrestling and why things happen that veteran writers have not, can not and will not ever be able to explain or express. I just felt like I was letting CHAIRSHOTS down as whole, not just Barry but the other columnists since we were quickly gaining momentum and call me a mark for the sheets but I was enjoying being a member of the infamous "Florida Boys" consisting of Bowdren, Lemieux, Lederberg, Rose and myself. Now I feel bad due to my initial phobia about the sheets and working in the biz part-time. I begged Barry to drop me without saying a word about why. But like a pro editor/publisher should and what he did was tell me "Hey, I can't just do that. It would look wierd and that's not the way I do things." He then assured me he would handle it with class but it needed some type of mention. As usual, Barry took care of it very well and I commend him for it. Although I probably was the only

person in wrestling with a consistent written column, I have since found out that my sheet phobia is useless 'cause the names I could list right now who at least talk to Dave and Wade and others in the sheets and give information to them would blow ya'll away. And I don't know mean just the ham n' egggers, I mean major names. However that's a whole different column one day. Barry has made it real clear the door is wide open for a return later on some day. Barry and I still talk about every day and as twisted as it may sound have even developed the first paragraph of my comeback return when and if WCW does decide I am not of any use to them anymore. I don't want to reveal that paragraph but take my word for it, it is a such a fucking real, no holds-barred statement and so very, very true. Hell, we laughed our asses off long distance when we came up with it.

I must confess the other side of this story is the unseen and stronger than strong spell pro wrestling has and always will have on me since my introduction to it in 1973. In no way am I trying to sound smart or act like a big shit, I'm telling you from my heart when I write all of this. It is really tough to put into words how it feels to garner respect and friendship today with some of the same individuals I paid money to see wrestle as a child and teenager. Not only that but unless they have me totally fooled, I feel quite accepted within the dressing rooms of pro wrestling and the fact that I am not a big mouth, that I do as they ask and "know" who the right people are and treat them accordingly has been very beneficial to me. I see guys who have 7, 10 or 15 years working all over who still get no respect from the other workers strictly because they shoot off their mouth or stooge off to the office about every little thing in hopes of getting booked. I thank God every day that I have a tremendous hotel career and am and will continue to make more money than I ever could in wrestling but I love wrestling, it's been a part of my life since I was 10 years old and I seriously doubt I would ever say I am not interested in it anymore. So that's it folks, that's the razors' edge version of my exit. I hope it has cleared up some of the questions that Barry mentioned to me were being asked about me. I am sincerely flattered that what I wrote in CHAIRSHOTS meant something to some of you. I will continue on in my part-time role with WCW as long as they'll have me. It's all about approval, appreciation and acceptance. That is part of my personality and always will be. I thrive on those three ingredients immensely. I have fulfilled those needs through my son Justin, my hotel manager's position and working in pro wrestling. I know two of the three are a sure thing of always being there, that being my son and my hotel career. If that third item ever becomes either non-relevant or non-reachable, I'll see you guys again in the pages of CHAIRSHOTS. God Bless, Peace and take care!!!



# ARENA RAMBLINGS

BY  
RON  
LEMIEUX

What is it with this editor? He takes a month off between issues and later comes out in 7 days. Must be part of this new free spirit deal. Hey have fun in NYC pal. Say hi to my old girlfriends, Ifa and Madeline Rossatti. You know, the Rosatti sisters.

Well, SuperBrawl was a super BUST in my opinion. Another glorified WCW Saturday Night show. Wow, Jimmy Garvin is back. That knocked me out of my chair..and sent me to the bathroom wretching. Now what they should have done, is have Hayes and Garvin come back out later and say that since the contract states a Freebird must face Badd, they bring out Terry Gordy. Now of course no one seems to know or want to talk about Gordy's health at this point but it would have been a great way to work his way back. And how could Bockwinkel say he would suspend Garvin when he wasn't even working for the company..... I'm glad they gave Terry Taylor the win over Page. Justice finally prevailed... We watched Steve Regal and Arn Anderson go 29 plus minutes for that finish!! Dusty should go back to cleaning toilets in the WWF.....Isn't it cool that the Nasty Boys always bring that guitar to the ring. Oh, you mean that was the only time they came out with it? Would it have been politically incorrect for them to bring out a steel rod? Seriously though, the Nasty Boys-Payne-Cactus bout was the best of the night in my book. An absolute brutal match. Cactus bump on the cement brought back memories of UAWF convention night in Memphis. Brian Knobbs landing on his head and wrist from Payne's whatever was unreal too. How much that there was a legit injury there?.....This company does such a great job in promoting Ric Flair's matches. Why can't they do that with everything else?.....The Jim Steele-Equalizer match was the worst I've seen. Well, not as bad as that Tom Magee-Wajima bout in Japan a few years ago. It was Wajima wasn't it?.....Totally shocked that they had Pillman get the pinfall on Austin. Then why does he not get a shot at the belt at either of the next 2 PPVs? Brain trust at work again.....Nick Bockwinkel insisted that Bossman wouldn't show favoritism to either Vader or Flair. He doesn't care for either one. Hmmm. Was that The Boss's twin I saw team with FLAIR and Sting in Lakeland just last week vs. VADER, Rude, & Simmons?.....This Flair-Vader bout had to be the worst screw job in a while. How could even the casual fans be satisfied that Flair got a win like that. Harley Race was the MVP in this bout with the bumps he took. The bout wasn't long enough before all the garbage started. Just awful.....Only hardcore to show up at my abode this time out was Jimmy Berkley. My wife's friend and her husband came over as well. He was way more mark than smart. Every time the guy would make a mark comment I would look Jimmy's way to see his reaction. I never got one. I didn't know if he didn't hear him or was holding it in. Now Pete, don't go off and say how I feel like I'm better than this guy. Let me relate it like this. If you're in a magazine store and you want to leaf through the wrestling mags but someone is looking at one also, will you not pick one up in fear that the guy will start talking to you about wrestling? Okay, maybe the stories don't relate but that's what is great about being a Truth Fairy..... Jimmy brought over a tape of USWA. Anyone seen Buddy Landell on these shows? Pretty soon he could change his last name to Rose and no one would know the difference. Slim Fast babacee.....Having Johnny Polo sub for Stan Lane as color commentator on Superstars was a mistake. It showed how much Lane doesn't belong there. Scotty was super.....Ron the Booker here (Can I use that name Jeff?) My scenario for Wrestlemania would be to have Luger beat Yoko. Have Roddy Piper ref the bout between Hart and Luger. Bret wins and Luger turns heel attacking Roddy. Have Piper and Luger feud around the horn. Luger has bombed as a heel and Roddy's interviews would get it over. Of course Piper would have to want to wrestle. Hey, no one said booking was easy. Ask Dusty Rhodes.....Jeff Cohen hit the nail right on the head in the last "CS". Too many people in this business get treated differently by some writers. Loved Dave Sherer's column too. Gee, what did they have in common?.....If Jim Crockett thinks he is going to make it big with guys like Hawk and Jake Roberts as his stars, he's got another thing coming.....Jerry Lawler's pre-trial is tomorrow as I type this. It's said if he is cleared look for a June return to Titan with Spellbinder and Bert Prentice to join him.....Up to now I've only seen a smattering of SMW and ECW tapes. I'm looking for a regular supplier now. I have over 300 tapes and will also deal in cash. If interested please contact me at 916 Slowwood Ct., Lake Mary, FL 32746. Until the day after Wrestlemania, See ya.

Ron

Hey, since I've got some space left, let's talk about WM X. Onpaper, it looks like it could be the worst ever. It should be the best since it's number 10. Other than the intrigue in the two title matches, what do we have? It will be fun to watch Michaels take bumps off a ladder but it takes away from the decent match they could have without the gimmick. If Crush-Savage's falls count anywhere bout is like their house show ones, that will be a big snooze. Borga-Earthquake? Ugh. Doink-Dink vs. Luna-Bam Bam? Double ugh. And let's not even start with the Quebecers vs. M.O.M. bout. Believe it or not, I rather see the Bushwhackers get a shot at the belts. Better add something decent or it will be "What the World Isn't Watching".



# CHAIRSHOTS GUEST WRITER

RINGWORDS II: Stephen Meyerson, Brooklyn, NY 2/11/94

I love newsletters and following the wrestling business, but I'm bored by the actual wrestling. My descending interest in wrestling started in May of 1991 when my building was finally wired for cable. Before cable (BC) all I had on tv were the 3 mediocre networks, 3 ordinary independent channels, and PBS. With such an unappealing menu to choose from, the 3 available hours of wrestling I had access to (2 WWF, 1 WCW) seemed important. I even taped WCW when I couldn't see it live. Once I got cable, I soon realized there were many better things than wrestling on tv. Consider the following alternatives: a) The "ATTITUDE" of MTV as reflected by MTV Unplugged, Real World, Alternative Nation, 120 Minutes, Beavis and Butthead, etc. b) The unhyped, unhurried, unfiltered, unpretentiousness of C SPAN I and II. c) The around the clock live sports and highlights offered by ESPN, ESPN II, MSG, Sports Channel, and Sports Channel America. d) The wide variety of other cable channels offering niche programming. As more people get cable and more programming choices become available, the ratings for wrestling will continue to decline. So will live attendance and pay per view buy rates. Wrestling, like roller derby 20 years ago, is in the downside of the evolutionary cycle. If it ever becomes extinct, I won't miss it at all. But I'll certainly miss the newsletters.

COLLAR AND ELBOW: Memo to Pete Lederberg: The purpose of newsletters is not to protect or apologize for the excesses of the wrestling business or the individuals in it...ThirtySomething means you're too young to mambo and too old to mosh...The little wrestling I watch is mostly to better appreciate what I read in the newsletters... After reading the 1/94 issue of Mike Rodgers' Ring Around the Northwest, I hope there are openings in HELL for Sandy and Art Barr. If there is justice, Sandy and Art will never do another wrestling show or "exhibition" in Oregon...Don't get worked up over which wrestler is better or worse. They're all just playfighting anyway...The big man billed as Primo Carnera III for IWCCW used to be Joshua Ben Gurion for Herb Abrams...In the 60s, the advertising slogan for Levy's Rye Bread was, "You don't have to be Jewish to love Levy's." Thirty years later, you don't have to love wrestling to love wrestling newsletters.

NEWSLETTER NATION: While plugging Pro Wrestling Sushi about 2 years ago, Dave Meltzer intentionally or unintentionally printed the wrong PO Box and zip code. MTV called it SUSHI UNPLUGGED...In recent issues of Matwatch (now monthly), Editor Steve Beverly advertised the 900 Hotline he's on but didn't mention the 99¢ per minute charge. I hope he'll correct this oversight in future issues...NY Governor Cuomo's pro business policies are working. According to an unimpeachable source, the Chairshots Corporation will soon be moving their editorial offices to NY...I'm still waiting for remaining issues or refunds from John Arezzi, Jon Gallagher, and Ross Blair. I'm better off waiting for Godot.

OLYMPIC ODDITIES: If US wrestling were an Olympic event, it would surely be the Downhill...Actors and Their Roles: Linda Dallas as Tonya Harding, Elizabeth as Nancy Kerrigan, Bam Bam Bigelow as Ronald Eckhardt..."Tonya/Nancy," "Skater's Brother Kills Father," "Bobsledder Steals Equipment From Rivals." Who's booking the Winter Olympics and will he, she or it work for WCW?

Getting a letter, column or article published in a newsletter is like being an independent wrestler. There are fewer newsletter editors and wrestling promoters around. Due to the lack of newsletters which print reader letters, I'm finally seeing my views on the Dory Funk/Bockwinkle match from WCW Slamboree (5/23/93) in print. 1) Fans chanted "boring" during that match because it was boring. The 15 minutes seemed like 15 hours. Did Andy Warhol say anything about 15 minutes of boredom? The match was as exciting as watching paint dry, grass grow or metal rust. 2) What Torch Editor Wade Keller spin doctored as "silent heat" during that match was in reality silent indifference. We're not in Japan, Wade. 3) Should anyone have cared that Lou Theszian didn't receive a higher billing during the ring introductions than Bugsy McGraw? No way! It was nice to see the oldtimers but totally unnecessary to recreate the pecking order of 20, 30 or 40 years ago. 4) While romanticizing the oldtimers, newsletter editors need to keep the following in mind: No wrestler ever won a title match through legit competition like a boxer, bowler or tennis player. Those who won titles were fortunate enough to be picked by the promoter. A wrestling title is like a/an Oscar, Emmy or Tony. What's different is that instead of the whole industry voting, the only voter is the promoter. In summary, no cow should be sacred in the newsletters. Especially the old ones.



# SMOKY MOUNTAIN HOTSPOTS

BY TIM WHITEHEAD

Welcome to the latest installment of Smoky Mountain Hotspots™, which would be Manami Toyota's favorite wrestling column if she could read English. In a recent issue, Bowdren-san pointed out that we're all a mark for something. Personally, I'm a mark for the Japanese girls, especially ichiban-babe Toyota-san!

**DATELINE KNOXVILLE: TERRY FUNK IMITATES SABU.** At "Sunday, Bloody Sunday" on 2/13 at the Knoxville Coliseum, the Funkster broke a table in half (using his head to get the job done) and later delivered a moonsault onto The Bullet, who had moments earlier been slammed onto a pile of chairs and sundry table parts. But despite Funk's awesome maneuver, Bullet rallied to score the victory in this Texas Death match, meaning that Bob Armstrong has been reinstated as SMW commissioner. Damn! I was hoping for Nick Bockwinkel! Incidentally, Bullet was really Bob Armstrong all along, for those of you who thought Undertaker's death and resurrection qualifies as wrestling. Too bad Vince can't pull that trick off in a courtroom.

Also at "Sunday, Bloody Sunday", Dirty White Boy regained the SMW Title from Brian Lee, which sent Tammy into a tizzy (and "tizzy" is a real word according to the dictionary, though it's probably difficult to translate into Japanese). White Boy won this chain match when Ron Wright "loaded the boot" and kicked Lee in the head, which is a gimmick Wright used as a wrestler more than two decades ago. Even the younger fans knew what he was doing since that same gimmick has been used for years around this territory by Robert Fuller, Tom Prichard, and others. This was Wright's return after "hip implant surgery", which I understand is much preferable to implant surgery which is out of style. The fans practically gave him a standing ovation. It was the biggest pop of the show.

The "Bloody Sunday" card shattered SMW's previous attendance and gate records, drawing 3,900 fans for a \$31,000 gate. The prior record, set at K-Town Showdown in August, was 2,400 paid for around \$18,000.

Some new faces will soon be debuting in SMW, including Well Dunn (Rex King & Steve Doll) and the outstanding Canadian team of Lance Storm & Chris Jericho, who will be billed as The Thrill Seekers, with the gimmick being that they like to do risky things such as bungee jumping, skydiving, disagreeing with Janet Reno, etc.. SMW was due for a change in personnel because the Heavenly Bodies vs. Rock & Rolls feud can't go on forever and the Bruise Brothers vs. Moondogs feud just wasn't getting over. The Bruises vs. Dogs cage match at "Bloody Sunday" was the only match where the crowd heat died.

The OBSERVER awards were released a month or so ago and SMW made a pretty good showing. In the Best Promotion and Best TV categories they were right up there with the Japanese. Jim Cornette won three categories, including Best Interviews, Best Booker, and Manager of the Year. In fact, SMW swept the top three spots for manager with Cornette, Tammy, and Wright, just as I predicted (go look it up) a few issues ago. Tracy Smothers was voted Most Improved, and by working for All Japan he stands to improve even more. Tracy tells me being in the ring against guys like Misawa, Kawada, and Kobashi is like fighting for your life.

Darryl Van Horne's line of the month: As Prince Khariswhoreallysucks (might as well make it one word) was mauling jobber Jason West during a TV squash, Van Horne said, "West has a better chance of getting Long Dong Silver to spend the night with Lorena Bobbitt than he does of winning this match!"

I don't know why the mainstream media are so upset about what happened to Nancy Kerrigan. Things like that happen in wrestling all the time. But will we see incessant network TV coverage of Jim Cornette's Drano® assault on Paul Morton? I guess this is yet another example of wrestling not getting the respect it deserves!

Now it's time for some well-deserved criticism of Dave Meltzer & Wade Keller. For years Dave & Wade have complained and editorialized about no-shows on wrestling cards, saying that all the no-shows helped destroy the house show business in America. On January 10th in Chilhowie, Virginia, Dave & Wade were scheduled, according to the booking sheet, to face the Heavenly Bodies in a televised bout. Yet, after all the sermonizing over the years about absenteeism, they both failed to appear, forcing the Rock & Roll Express to sub for them. Sometimes I'm ashamed to know those guys!

Prediction: SMW will draw a bigger crowd at Cobb County Civic Center in March than WCW drew at their last Omni card. Okay, so it's an easy bet! I'm entitled to a freebie every now and then!

See ya next month:

**NEW ADDRESS!!**

**BARRY ROSE/CHAIRSHOTS**

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It is not impossible for a promotion in this country to get fans excited about a big card. Really. Thanks to the wrestling friendly folks at Channel America, who give me my weekly dose of Smoky Mountain Wrestling, I am able to follow Jim Cornette's promotion on a current basis. The TV shows building up to the big "Sunday Bloody Sunday" card in Knoxville made me want to go to that show in the worst way. It was like my younger days when the NWA used to make me want to go to the Philly Civic Center to see their cards. ECW did the same thing with their big February 5th card. It's great to see that heretofore lost art of making fans want to attend house shows is still alive and well, at least in the small promotions...If/when Barry gets tired of reading my column, or the Torch boys put out a contract on me, I hope that Steve Vohe gets my space here. As I have said before, everything I read from him I find myself agreeing with completely and his letter in the 2/12 Torch was no exception. It didn't hurt that his opening line was "Your editorial on the Royal Rumble was a joke." If I ever make it out to Montebello, California I will definitely look Steve up and buy him a Samuel Adams Boston Lager. In the same issue of the sheet, former Torch columnist Eric Krol also had a letter published that showed me he hasn't changed a bit since Wade dumped him from the sheet...I watched a lot of the matches from the 1993 New Japan Super Juniors tourney this weekend. Some impressions. The matches while fine, were not good as in years past. Still, they were better than the matches New Japan chose to put on TV during the same time period. Wild Pegasus Kid Chris Benoit, who won the tournament, is a fabulous wrestler. He really is. The one thing he is lacking though is charisma and personality. Watching his matches is like how I remember viewing the Russian athletes on TV when I was a kid. They were great, but it seemed like they were computerized. It's a damn shame that Dean Malenko does not get more work that he does. He is great to watch. Shinjiro Otani is the next superstar junior heavyweight. The kid is rapidly developing into a super wrestler and has a great presence in the ring. Watching these shows, in retrospect, showed where New Japan was going as a company. They chose to bore us with Tenryu and the Skinheads instead of showing exciting matches. Unfortunately, I can see that trend continuing in 1994...Triple A continues to chew the big garbonza bean this year. Their TV is beyond schizophrenic. They have repeatedly shown so many matches that I am getting tired of watching their shows. When they do air fresh matches, we get slugs like their version of the Doinks, Los Payasos, and the cross dressers, Baby Sharon, The Rose, and May Flowers, and of course Cien Caras and his brothers (who are way over but I don't know why). This time last year they were airing fabulous 6 man matches where it seemed like the guys were trying to outdo each other. Now, they are stating to seem like the WWF at their peak. I hope this is not another case of too much success too soon...Mike Tenay's "Wrestling Insiders" show airs on two radio stations in my area. That would be good news except thus far, the show has only aired once. WCAU out of Philadelphia has preempted the show every week, for college basketball and the Olympics. It won't get any better in 6 weeks when the Phillies open, as CAU airs their games. WSKR out of Atlantic City aired the show once and has since preempted it for Car Racing, which will be the case, basically, until racing season ends. That really pissed me off. I can see bumping the show for "real" sports, but what kind of genetic mutant would sit by his radio listening to a car race for 6 hours? Apparently the answer is "a lot" because when I called to complain, the program director informed me that car racing brings in big numbers. Is this country scary or what...The next big ECW show is March 5th at the ECW Arena and I plan on going. With all of the talk about Jim Crockett's new promotion starting up next week, (and hasn't all the talk of the new WWN been very reminiscent of Joe Pedicino's GWF) and all of the talk that Tod Gordon wants Paul E. to choose between the two, I am wondering if ECW's best days are already behind it. Given the state of the business in this country, I hope that's not the case...I am so sick of hearing about Tonya Harding that I'd like to Shawn Eckard bash her with a stinkin' pipe. The way she has been falling in practice, she will have to accept Playboy's 250K offer to pose nekked because she ain't gonna win squat in Norway...On an Olympic note, I'd love to see Elvis Stoyko go to Japan and become a Junior Heavyweight. I loved the way that guy skated. He actually looked like an athlete out there instead of a dancer. I knew the judges would screw him over...Speaking of the Olympics, I have been very disappointed with CBS' coverage. In years past, the actual events were the story. Now it seems like they fit some of the event in around all of the stinkin' human interest crap. I know that the personal approach is what makes people watch, but sheesh, enough is enough...I heard that the UWFI offered almost 100 million yen (almost a million bucks) to any champion from another promotion to fight their champion Nobuhiko Takada. I'd love to see Akira Maeda accept and then have Takada kick the tar out of him. I am really curious how Maeda will answer a challenge like this that really puts him squarely on the spot...Everyone keeps telling me how good Bobby Heenan has been on the PPV's, but I just can't bring myself through the agony of sitting through 3 hours of their product. Like last night I heard that they went almost 30 tedious minutes in the Regal vs Anderson match. What is the point? And with Regal scheduled to defend against Larry Zybysko on the May PPV, I can see the most boring match in the history of the business. Hell, 15 minutes will probably go by before the two biggest stallers in the business even lock up. Where do I send the check for \$24.95...I really enjoyed the touching tribute that our editor did a few issues back. It brought a tear to my eye. To me, Barry's column exemplified all of the best things about wrestling like spending time with people that are important to you. Until next time...



# Sucker Punch

BY BARRY ROSE



AHH! La Dolce Vita. The Good Life! It's a hectic couple of weeks as I make my preparations to head east and conquer the Big Apple once again. It's almost a relief to be stepping back into the CHAIRSHOTS Florida offices just a mere seven days after our last rag went out. Sadly, it's also the last time I'll be in those offices for a long time. You've seen the NEW NYC address listed several times, so please send all mail in care of that address. I won't actually be in New York until March 16. Let's see what's happening this week....

●**CHRIS CANDITO HAS GOT FUTURE SUPERSTAR** written all over him. His Smoky Mountain stuff has been nothing short of brilliant (thanks to Tim "I really seem to be attracted to Asian women" Whitehead). His matches last month with the Dirty White Boy and Louis Spicolli were engrossing in a way that isn't seen to much in either of the big two. Candito's match with the DWB reminded me of the kind of grappling we used to see a decade ago when territories flourished. Candito's mike work is right up there with his wrestling ability and if someone (or some booker) had an ounce of creativity, just imagine what could be done with Candito, Brian Christopher (another "future superstar" whose only limitation appears to be his height-but, after only a few years in the business is one of the best interviews around), and Sabu (the Torch has praised this guy exactly the way they did Sean Waltman), in a junior heavyweight division. WAIT A MINUTE! Quality wrestling! Now there's an idea!

●**MISSY HYATT RUMORS ABOUND** in hardcore circles. "Reliable Sources" (which gives it a 50/50 shot at being accurate) tell us that she wants to be known as Melissa now and is moving to New York City to pursue an acting career and attend some acting school. No doubt a decision made after she read my column in the last issue concerning my move. Sorry, Missy. The 1987 UWF Missy in her blue leather dress with breasts flopping out, was really hot. But the 1994 "Used & Abused" version seems more suited to the Memphis style of dealing with women...which leads us to Missy rumor no. 2. Seems like Someone from the Mempho office (can you say Eddie Gilbert, boys and girls) wants to bring her in to work a "shoot" type of angle with Mr. G himself. And finally, A lot of people are expecting Missy to show up at the Crockett tapings in New York in a few days. Seems that long time rival, Paul E., wants to use her. Anythings possible!

●**"IF THE BRITISH HAD IMAGINATION, THEY WOULDN'T HAVE A QUEEN."** I opened a sheet a couple of months ago and saw a plug for a sheet called "Arena Report", published by some guy in England. No problem, I thought to myself. Lemieux stopped almost a year ago. Imagine my surprise when I opened the Feb. 7, 1994 Observer and saw another Limey publishing a newsletter, only this one was entitled "SUCKER PUNCH". Excuse me, but doesn't someone else within the underground wrestling community already use that phrase. You English had better straighten up, pronto! What do I expect from a country where they smoke fags, and eat food called "spotted dick" and "bangers and mash." Anymore of this theivery and I'll raise the "Friqqin' Foreigner" rates up a buck!

●**"I LOVE NEWSLETTERS AND** following the wrestling business, but I'm bored by the actual wrestling." There are no truer words than those written by Stephen Meyerson in this issues "Guest Writer" column. I certainly feel the same way, and judging by the conversations I've had with many of you, we're not alone in this thinking. You know that when the hardcore feuds replace the feuds in the ring, the wrestling business is on a definite downward trend. Take a look at Wrestlemania 10. MOM v. Quebecers? Doink and his buttplug v. Bigelow and one of Tom Nash's castoffs? Remember the days when a big card or PPV meant something? most of this card looks like filler. Quick, somebody say something about another hardcore. And speaking of WM10, our next issue will be published the day after the "big" event. I'll be attending in person with a group of 'cores from the east and west coasts. Also in issue #20, Lederberg and Bigelow return, Wade Ratliff does the guest thing, third installment of Hitch's "Hardcore", plus the usual nonsense. Don't forget-March 21! And before I go, let me say a tearful goodbye to my Florida Paesans. Jimmy Berkley, Jeff Bowdren, Pete Lederberg (who I've known for more than half of my life), Ron Lemieux, Greg Goode-Hey! I'm really gonna miss you guys! We've had some damn good times.....



# HARDCORE

BY JOHN HITCHCOCK '94

YOU KNOW, LIFE AS  
A RASSLIN FAN IS A  
REAL STRANGE LIFE.



I MEAN BIZARRE.  
SHIT, EVERYBODY  
IN GREENSBORO,



KNOWS I'M INTO  
GRIPS AND COMICS.  
EVER SINCE I WAS  
10-11 YEARS OLD.



I HAVE HAD A BUNCH  
OF WARPED FUCKERS  
WALK UP AND ASK IS



COMICS FAKE?



COPS! I MEANT TO  
SAY IS WRESTLING  
FAKE?



I USED TO GO INTO THESE  
LONG TAPS ABOUT  
BUSINESS, MONEY  
AND JOB BUT



NOW I JUST RUN LIKE  
HELL! I DON'T WANT  
TO TALK TO # DUMB  
ASSES.



YOU KNOW WHAT? DUMB  
GRAPPLING FANS ARE  
EVERYWHERE. DO NOT  
FOOL YOURSELF.



I GOT THROUGH SUB-  
TEACHING A FEW YEARS  
WITH MY HAND CORE  
NEWS.



RASSLIN IS GREAT  
FOR BUBBLING  
YOUNG MINDS!



YOU NEVER KNOW  
JUST WHO IS A HARD  
CORE. YA KNOW?



A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE  
INVITED ME OVER FOR  
A DINNER AND A BUNCH  
OF SEMI-SMART FOLKS  
WERE THERE.



THIS GUY AND I USED  
TO WATCH LEWIN,  
BRADY, BURT SAWREK  
SO I FIGURED HE  
WAS O.K.



WE ALL TALKED  
GRIPS FOR A FEW  
HOURS, YOU KNOW  
INSIDE STUFF.  
RUMORS, SCOOPS,



AND AS I WAS LEAVING  
THIS GUY'S BROTHER-IN-  
LAW ASKES - ARE  
THOSE ~~NINJA~~ NINJA'S  
IN TEXAS REALLY  
NINJA'S?



SEE, YOU NEVER KNOW! YOU COULD GIVE THIS GUY A TON OF OBSCURE AND IT JUST  
WOULD NOT SINK IN. JEEZ-US MAN! HOW STUPID CAN PEOPLE BE?

John Hitchcock '94